

Delaware Files Lawsuit Against Opioid Industry

Suit Seeks To Hold Manufacturers, Distributors and Retailers Responsible for Cost, Impact of Prescription Opioid Epidemic

On behalf of Delawareans, Attorney General Matt Denn filed suit Friday against some of the nation's largest manufacturers, distributors, and retailers of prescription opioid drugs, alleging that their failures to meet their legal obligations have fueled an opioid addiction epidemic that is devastating individuals, families, and communities across Delaware.

The lawsuit seeks to hold them financially responsible for the harm they have caused to the State and its citizens and to require them to change their conduct to help end the epidemic.

"Opioid manufacturers misrepresented the addictive nature of their products. They, along with national opioid distributors and national pharmacies, knew that they were shipping quantities of opioids around the country so enormous that they could not possibly all be for legitimate medical purposes, but they failed to take basic steps to ensure that those drugs were going only to legitimate patients," Attorney General Denn said. "These companies ignored red flags that opioids were being diverted from legitimate channels of distribution and use to illicit channels. The failure of these corporate defendants to meet their legal obligations has had a devastating impact on Delawareans."

Delaware's lawsuit cites statistics showing that, each year, more than 50 opioid pills are shipped into Delaware for every man, woman, and child in the state. When limited to persons – including those who received prescriptions for a week or less following minor medical procedures – who actually have used

opioids, the estimated number is 440 pills per person per year.

The manufacturer defendants named in Delaware's lawsuit are Purdue Pharma and Endo Pharmaceuticals. The distributor defendants named in the lawsuit are McKesson, Cardinal Health, Amerisource Bergen, Anda Pharmaceuticals, and H.D. Smith. The retailer defendants named in the lawsuit are CVS and Walgreens. Other defendants may be named in the future.

"The filing of this suit is an important step in what will likely be complex and time-intensive litigation against sophisticated national corporations," Attorney General Denn said. "But these defendants must be held accountable for the damage that they have caused to our state and its citizens."

The lawsuit, filed in Delaware Superior Court's Complex Commercial Litigation Division, can be found [here](#).